

THE PRESBYTERIAN

of the South

VOL. I.

ATLANTA, GA., JANUARY, 6, 1909.

NO. 1.

—This Week—

Greeting!

After Christmas

Farewell, Old Year.

Numerical Responsibility.

Growth of Home Missions.

Durant College.

Home Missions in Texas.

Plumtree and the Boys' School.

A New Year's Prayer for Christ.

Church-Going a Necessity of Life.

The Aim of the Acts.

The Red-Headed Boy.

"Coddling saints or capturing sinners; which should the preacher be doing?" is a striking way of putting a very practical question. The ministry is set for the edification of God's people and for the proclamation of the truth. Unfortunately a good many of the saints have to be petted and run after and "coddled" to keep them in line. Where they expect too much of this it is a waste of time for the pastor to try to meet all their desires. The worst of it is that those who demand it get into the habit of expecting it, and they grow mightily in their demands. It takes a wise pastor in such cases not to do too much of it.

It is said that Memphis is being overrun with bums and gamblers who have been run out of "dry" Alabama, Georgia, and Mississippi. That is one of the inevitable evils. Any State or community which will tolerate the evils of gambling and the saloon traffic is bound to become the dumping ground for the States and communities which have had the wisdom to get rid of such evils. The thing to do in such cases, the remedy to apply is not to complain but to take steps to get rid of the same undesirable class.

That quiet, earnest talk which the Savior and Nicodemus had was doubtless very much longer than the record of it by John would indicate. It probably covered several hours and embraced many topics in a very full unfolding of the subjects of the conference. It is more than likely that what is given us is merely the substance of the conversation, the principles of the matters about which the little company of two were concerned. Certainly Nicodemus was satisfied, for, though he did not at once come out and announce himself, he appears to have been a believer in Jesus long before the tragic hour in which, when others were falling away and even Christ's disciples were standing afar off, he

took part with Joseph of Arimathea in the burial of his Lord's body.

Love proves itself by what it does, by what it gives, and by what it gives up. It uses all its activity in doing everything that is happiest and best for its object. It goes beyond obligation to bestow what mere duty or justice do not demand. It surrenders its own to fill the want, to enrich the life, to beautify the character of that which is loved. Thus the three expressions for it, love, grace, mercy. The richest expression of all these phases is that rendered in Christ's own words, "God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him might not perish but have everlasting life."

Conscious ignorance is a proof of growing knowledge. One does not really begin to know until he knows the fact, that he does not know. Paul's paradox, "When I am weak, then am I strong," applies here. The man that is wise in his own conceit, who thinks that "he knows it all," is so encased in his own ignorance that he resists and prevents the approach of knowledge. The man who is conscious of his emptiness is ready to be filled. Receptivity and knowledge do not live apart. Each in the real sense produces the other.

The people who are moving from one neighborhood or community to another and who do not at once identify themselves with the church where they go may be, as many think, hardly worth looking after. Those who have to be hunted up and coaxed to do their duty may be, it is true, of very little account. Yet they have souls to save. Because they are very maimed and halt and blind is the more reason for searching them out and compelling them to come to the feast. Their failures are no excuse for others for neglect.

A serious evil which affects all the churches is that of professed Christian people going to large cities to live and leaving their church membership behind. Lacking the sense of religious responsibility in their new home, they soon drop out of line altogether, and are in a few years entirely lost to the church. Pastors whose members move to the cities should carefully notify some minister there, that people of this kind may be looked after at once. This may result in taking the names off the village or country church rolls, but may save many a soul from dropping into indifference and finally disappearing altogether from the church.